

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. In the Office Action, mailed April 14, 2005, the Examiner objected to claims 3, 4, 17 and 18, and rejected claims 1, 2, 4-16 and 18-24. By this amendment, claims 2, 3 and 17 have been canceled, claims 1, 4, 16 and 18 have been amended and new claims 24-27 have been added. Following entry of these amendments, claims 1, 4-16 and 18-28 will be pending in the application.

Claim Objections

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 4 and 18 because of certain informalities. Specifically, the Examiner requested that Applicant replace the phrase "0 volts" with "-0 volt-" in claims 4 and 18. Applicant has amended claims 4 and 18 to make the suggested correction.

For at least this reason, the objections to claims 4 and 18 should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5-6 and 19-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 5-6 and 19-20.

A rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is not appropriate when "those skilled in the art would understand what is claimed when the claim is read in light of the specification." Orthokinetics, Inc. v. Safety Travel Chairs, Inc., 806 F.2d 1565, 1576 (Fed. Cir. 1986). In the Office Action, the Examiner conclusively asserts that claims 5-6 and 19-20 are formulated such that it is unclear how the claimed output voltage range can exceed the claimed input voltage range by a factor of approximately three. Applicant respectfully submits that the specification fully defines and supports the allegedly unclear claim language. Moreover, those skilled in the art would completely understand this language in the context of claims 5-6 and 19-20 after being taught by the Applicant's specification.

Specifically, regarding the language, "by a factor of approximately three," the specification teaches that the general subject matter of the application includes "I/O buffers"

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where "[c]ore signals may have lower voltage differential signaling levels, for example between 0 and 1 V, whereas external output signals may have higher voltage signaling, for example ranging between 0 and 3.3 V" (Specification, p. 1, ll. 12-15). It is readily apparent from this background that at least part of the specification includes I/O buffers with an output voltage of up to 3.3V compared to an input voltage of up to 1.0V, i.e., a factor of approximately three. Further, in relation to the I/O buffer of Figure 2, Applicant notes that the input high/low differential can be, for example, 1V / 0V (Specification, p. 5, l. 3). In additional Figure 2 disclosure, Applicant teaches that when the differential input X/XB is high/low, the output is driven high, or toward an inverted Vss (Specification, p. 5, ll. 3-9). Likewise, when the differential input X/XB is low/high, the output is driven low, or toward an inverted Vdd (Specification, p. 5, ll. 10-16). It would be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, after consideration of Applicant's teachings, that Vss and Vdd can be chosen such that the output voltage range can exceed the input voltage range by a factor of approximately three as claimed in claims 5-6 and 19-20.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the § 112, second paragraph, rejections of claims 5-6 and 19-20 should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 3 and 17 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner further noted that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting the allowable subject matter contained in these objected-to claims. Applicant has canceled claims 2, 3 and 17 and has incorporated the subject matter of these dependent claims into their respective rejected base independent claims. Specifically, the subject matter of canceled dependent claims 2 and 3 have been incorporated into amended independent claim 1, and the subject matter of canceled dependent claim 17 has been incorporated into amended independent claim 16.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the objections of dependent claims 3 and 17 have been rendered moot, and, based at least on the Examiner's

allowability assessment of the subject matter of claims 3 and 17, amended independent claims 1 and 16 are in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request a Notice to that effect.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 5, 9-10, 16, 19 and 22-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,288,575 to Forbes (herein "Forbes"). Further in the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 5 and 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0061525 to Tamaki (herein "Tamaki"). Applicant contends that these rejections should be withdrawn.

Independent Claims 1 and 16

As discussed above in relation to the allowability of the subject matter contained in claims 3 and 17, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 16 to include the allowable subject matter of claims 3 and 17, respectively. Applicant asserts that the cited art, including Forbes and Tamaki, fail to describe each and every element of amended independent claims 1 and 16.

Thus, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claims 1 and 16 are in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request a Notice to that effect.

Dependent Claims 2, 5, 8-11, 19 and 22-23

Dependent claim 2 has been canceled. Non-amended claims 5, 8-11, 19 and 22-23 all ultimately depend from either amended independent claim 1 or 16. The allowability of dependent claims 5, 8-11, 19 and 22-23 thus follows from the allowability of amended independent claims 1 and 16; as such, dependent claims 5, 8-11, 19 and 22-23 are allowable over the art of record.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the § 102 rejections of claims 2, 5, 8-11, 19 and 22-23 should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 4, 6-7, 13-14, 18 and 20-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Forbes as applied to claims 1 and 16. Further in the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 4, 6-7 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as

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allegedly being unpatentable over Tamaki as applied to claim 1. Applicant contends that these rejections should be withdrawn.

Dependent Claims 4, 6-7, 12-15, 18 and 20-21

Claims 4, 6-7, 12-15, 18 and 20-21 all ultimately depend from either amended independent claim 1 or 16. The allowability of dependent claims 4, 6-7, 12-15, 18 and 20-21 thus follows from the allowability of amended independent claims 1 and 16; as such, dependent claims 4, 6-7, 12-15, 18 and 20-21 are allowable over the art of record.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the § 103 rejections of claims 4, 6-7, 12-15, 18 and 20-21 should be withdrawn.

New Claims

By this amendment, Applicant has added new independent method claim 24 and associated dependent claims 25-27. For at least the reasons presented throughout this response, Applicant asserts that these new claims are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in a condition of allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
PILLSBURY WINTHROP SHAW PITTMAN LLP

Date: 7/14/05



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